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DPC Note No. 122 - "Response to Soviet Proposals for Troop Withdrawals in Europe if put forward at the Disarmament Subcommittee"

1. In view of the events of the past year, it would be folly to take, in the spring of 1957, a position set forth on April 23, 1956. Our position tends to be rigid enough without our going out of the way to appear rigid. In other words, we should at least give the appearance of having changed our position in recognition of changes in the world situation. Nutting's stand is unfortunate in one other respect. It could imply that we will not discuss reduction of forces in Germany apart from the reunification of Germany because we expect to achieve the reunification of Germany through the use of these forces. In reality the quickest way to reunify Germany might well be to pull all forces out and let the Germans go to it. I doubt that the East German regime could maintain itself indefinitely in that situation, much less impose itself on West Germany.

2. It is important to remember that the 17 November proposals came after Poland and Hungary. This suggests one of the following alternatives:

- (a) The Russians are just making propaganda and have no intention of getting out of Eastern Europe.
- (b) In spite of unrest in the area, the Russians think they can keep enough power and influence in Eastern Europe to give them a net gain from our withdrawal.
- (c) The Russians feel that a Western withdrawal is worth the risk of losing a great deal more influence in Eastern Europe.

3. Recently there have been reports of new arrangements between Russia and Czechoslovakia calling for the stationing of Russian troops in that country. This would improve the Russian position under all three alternatives. Under (a) it adds to the general Russian military position. Under (b) they might hope to confine the agreement to Russian troops in Germany and Poland, leaving a forward position in Czechoslovakia, and under both (b) and (c) it would give the Russians more quid to balance against western quo. In any case a build up in Czechoslovakia would be a logical thing to do before pulling out of Germany.

4. The foregoing suggests that the Russians are getting themselves set to minimize the effects of events in Poland and Hungary and that we should not be surprised by some further initiative from them. Under the circumstances we would look a mite foolish hanging on to our ancient concepts.

cc: EXSEC (Not for Log)